

# YEAST INFECTION

Arizona Department of Corrections  
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program  
HEP 1036- 01/06

## What is a vaginal yeast infection?

Vaginal yeast infections are caused by a fungus. Yeast infections can be very uncomfortable.

Symptoms include the following:

- Itching and burning in the vaginal and around the outside of the vagina (the vulva, the “lips” of skin that surround your vagina)
- A white vaginal discharge that looks like cottage cheese
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Swelling of the vulva

Yeast infections are so common that three-fourths of all women will have one at some time in their lives. Half of women have more than one infection in their lives.

If you have symptoms of a yeast infection, **fill out an HNR** so health staff can determine if a yeast infection is the cause of your symptoms.

## What causes vaginal yeast infections?

Yeast normally lives in small numbers on the skin and inside the vagina. Sometimes, too many yeast can grow and cause a vaginal infection. This can be caused by menstruation, pregnancy, some antibiotics, oral contraceptives, steroids, and diabetes.

Moisture and irritation of the vagina also encourages yeast to grow.

## How are these infections treated?

There are several medicines available to cure a yeast infection. Your health care provider will discuss what treatment will work best for you. You may be given medicine in a pill, liquid, or cream form.

## How can I avoid getting another infection?

Here are things you can do to help prevent another yeast infection:

- Don't wear tight-fitting clothes.
- Wear cotton panties.
- Wipe from front to back after going to the bathroom.
- Reduce the amount of sweets and caffeine in your diet (and reduce alcohol intake after release).
- Don't use feminine hygiene products such as douches and deodorants.
- Use sanitary pads and tampons only when and if necessary.

It's very easy to mistake symptoms of a sexually transmitted disease (STD) for a yeast infection. Several STD's may show initial symptoms similar to those of a yeast infection. Make sure to **fill out an HNR** as soon as you notice any symptoms.